

Community Alternatives to Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facilities Demonstration Grant Abstract

Montana

Project Description: Montana currently pays for inpatient mental health services for more than 450 Severely Emotionally Disturbed (SED) youth. In State Fiscal Year 2006, 109 were served out of state. This is neither cost effective nor beneficial. AMP Montana (Alternatives for Medicaid to PRTFs in Montana) provides a cost-neutral, effective alternative. This project will allow Montana to offer a roster of previously unavailable services to Medicaid-eligible youth who meet a residential level of care. By taking a Systems of Care approach and providing flexible, wraparound, client-centered and family-directed services, 100 youth during the life of the project will be given viable options that will help them remain in their homes. Families and youth will be engaged in designing the service system at two levels – through family-directed treatment plans, and by engaging at a systems level.

Project Goals: The overarching goal of AMP Montana is to preserve families and prevent youth with SED from entering PRTFs. This will be accomplished by ensuring that alternative home- and community-based services are available, and that youth have access to services in the least restrictive placements closest to home. Supporting goals include developing and coordinating an integrated, culturally competent system of supports for youth in six of Montana's most populous counties. This would be accomplished by strengthening or creating local continuums that include a broad cross-sector of child-serving systems, including mental health, child protective and chemical dependency services, local schools, local juvenile detention and probation, and the medical community.

How the Grant will Improve Community Integrated Services: Systems integration is a long-term priority in Montana, as evidenced by the Children's System of Care Committee (SOC) and the requirement for a Multi-agency Memorandum of Understanding (52-2-303 MCA) passed by the 2003 Legislature. The SOC is charged with developing and coordinating an integrated service support system for youth with SED under age 18, who have multiple service needs and are living in or about to be placed in an out-of-home setting. The Committee is comprised of State DPHHS mental health, child protection, developmental disabilities and chemical dependency treatment bureaus, the Office of Public Instruction, the Department of Corrections, Youth Justice Council and the youth courts. These efforts have been bolstered by a 2004 Systems of Care grant from SAMHSA. Despite the work that has been accomplished at the systems level, a combination of factors prevents Montana's youth with SED from receiving comprehensive, integrated community-based services. These include a sparse population scattered over a vast geographic area, lack of crisis intervention, ongoing education and support services for families coupled with lack of funding that can be used for flexible community-based services. This grant will improve integrated services by providing families access to the services they need to keep their children stable and safe in the home and the community.

Ultimate Outcomes and Products: Outcomes will include offering 100 youth and their families options that they've never had before, and the tools they need to achieve better functional levels across a number of domains. This will produce greater independence and increased self management for families. These efforts will also produce a community-level template that can be used to establish the wraparound HCBS services in Montana communities, and the cost-neutral strategies needed to implement a sustainable 1915(c) waiver at the end of the five year demonstration project.